

NUTRITION TIP 1

Talking about portion sizes - does your steak, fillet of fish, or chicken breast flow over the edge of your plate? The size and thickness of the palm (not the fingers too!) of *your* hand is the amount of protein *you* need. This goes for children too. Your clenched fist is the amount of starchy foods (rice, pasta, potatoes, bread, etc), to eat in a meal and an open fist for the amount of vegetables. This is a quick and easy way to see how much food you – and your children – should be eating in a meal. Or, looking at your plate (not a huge dinner plate either), a quarter should be protein, a quarter be starchy foods and a half should be vegetables.

NUTRITION TIP 2

Here's a quick and handy way to get your antioxidants. **EAT THE RAINBOW!** That's right – eat as many colourful vegetables and fruits as you can. Variety is the key. Think of red tomatoes, red, green and yellow capsicum, purple egg plant, bright green broccoli, white cauliflower, orange carrot and sweet potato, green and red cabbage, green bok choy, colourful lettuces (give the old iceberg the flick!), and red strawberries, purple grapes, blueberries, yellow and white peaches, white bananas, green kiwifruit – go for a stroll through the fruit and veg aisle at the supermarket – or even better, your local fruit market, and see what you can come up with that's in season!

NUTRITION TIP 3

Eat low GI! Low Glycaemic Index food. GI refers to the effect which a food has on your blood glucose (sugar) levels. We need to choose low GI carbs - ones that produce only small fluctuations in our blood glucose and insulin levels. Start by getting rid of the white stuff – flour, sugar, salt, rice, potatoes etc and try some of the brown stuff – brown rice, wholemeal pastas (you can have some regular pastas and noodles as well), whole grain, sourdough, stone ground breads, some of the unusual grains like quinoa (pronounced kiinwa), legumes, and plenty of fruits (like apples, stone fruits and citrus) and vegetables. You can have white rice (Basmati or Doongara), and choose orange sweet potatoes, rolled oats, muesli and semolina, instead of white potatoes, and most processed breakfast cereals. According to <http://www.glycemicindex.com/>, eating low GI will help us lose weight, control diabetes, reduce blood cholesterol and sugar, and reduce the risk of heart disease and colon cancer. Worth a try? You bet!

NUTRITION TIP 4

Water – we need more of it! Not just in our dams, but also in our bodies. Did you know that by the time you feel thirsty, you are already dehydrated? Our bodies are well over 75% water – it surrounds and fills our cells, is part of our blood and lymph and mucous membranes, and part of the fluid which cushions our joints – water is vital! Many people mistake a thirst signal for hunger – and eat. Try drinking a glass of filtered water first, and see how you go. Keeping yourself hydrated may get rid of those niggly headaches, aches and pains, and that bloated feeling from fluid retention. Drink 8 glasses a day – more if you're working outside in the heat and humidity. How to remember? Start with having a glass every time you go to the bathroom, and definitely have one with your cup of tea or coffee – and reduce the number of these that you have each day. Tea and coffee are diuretics and pull water out of the body.

NUTRITION TIP 5

YMWR! *Your Mother Was Right!* Eat your fruit and vegetables. How many? Well, 5-9 serves of vegetables is the recommendation and 2-3 serves of fruit. A serve is about ½ cup of vegetables, so say, 1 tomato, ½ cup of steamed broccoli, ½ cup steamed carrots – hey! This is easy! You're up to three serves already. Of course – the more, the merrier! Having some fruit for breakfast with your low GI cereal, a salad at lunch with a piece of fruit, and some vegetables at night makes it all the easier. It is even suggested that you try to eat up to 30 different foods a day – grains, vegetables, meats, dairy, fruits, legumes – etc.

NUTRITION TIP 6

A US study (www.ffnmag.com/ASP) has found that dietary supplements could save more the \$US24 billion in health care costs. As the population ages with the post-war baby boomer bulge, there are more and more people heading towards needing more and more health care. The study focussed on specifics like:

- Calcium with vitamin D – avoiding 776,000 hospitalisations for hip fractures and associated nursing facilities (savings over 5 years: \$16.1 billion)
- Folic acid – women of child bearing age should be taking about 400mcg daily to help prevent neural tube defects (5 year savings: \$3.2 billion).
- Omega 3 fatty acids – if over 65s took 1800mg per day, about 374,301 hospitalisations could be avoided (5 year savings: \$3.2 billion). Omega 3's are anti-inflammatory and are good for mood, brain power, and cardiovascular health.
- Lutien with zanxanthin – to help prevent age-related macular degeneration and subsequent blindness and dependence; about 6-10mg of lutien with zanxanthin will save, over 5 years, about \$3.6 billion.

But apart from these specifics, a good multi vitamin and mineral every day can supply those nutrients you may be deficient in from day to day living. Just for one example, the B complex (and these work best in synergy), are necessary for the conversion of food to energy, the production of important neurotransmitters in the brain, and many

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other vital components of the body. But stress and eating junk food can deplete you in these vitamins. Some junk foods actually cause the body to use more nutrition to process them, than they supply to the body.

NUTRITION TIP 7

Exercise – don't groan! Thirty minutes a day can lower your risk for just about everything – isn't that worth taking ½ an hour out of your day for? Things like heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, depression, and even some cancers. People who exercise moderately for 30 minutes most days of the week, research is showing, have a 27% decreased risk of dying prematurely. You decrease the production of free radicals in your body – those nasty little things which cause cells – the basic building block of your body – to become dysfunctional. You can even divide it up into 10 minutes, 3 times a day.

NUTRITION TIP 8

Fish – for omega 3 fatty acids. Your cells need good fats to make their membrane walls flexible and healthy. Great for combating inflammation, improving brain power, heart disease, diabetes and cancers. Also try walnuts, flaxseeds, avocados, and olive oils for other good fats.

NUTRITION TIP 9

Be sociable – call a close friend. Be involved in something other than yourself! Volunteering is good for your health; doing good gives your immune system a boost. Stay linked with people and don't get stuck at home, slumped in front of the TV or your computer. Keep nurturing friendships – don't get isolated.

NUTRITION TIP 10

De-Stress. Relax for at least 10 minutes – put those feet up and breathe! Get out and garden, listen to music, read a good book – anything that calms you down. Stress – especially chronic stress – can lead to all sorts of dis-ease and illnesses. It affects your entire body – your hormonal, immune, nervous and cardiovascular systems. Lowering stress levels reduces the risk of heart attack.

NUTRITIONAL TIP 11

Sleep!!!! Almost everyone you speak to admits to feeling tired or not getting enough sleep. Poor sleep and not enough sleep is linked to diabetes, obesity, high cholesterol and triglycerides, high blood pressure, high blood sugar, and mood swings. If you're only getting five or six hours a night, that is not enough. You need between 7 ½ to 8 ½ - but you need to find out how much *you* need. Keep your bedroom dark and moderately cool. Spend the last hour or so before bedtime, doing something relaxing; don't read a thriller or watch a scary, or adrenalin rush movie. Light – and heat – will wake you up, because melatonin (your sleep hormone) is suppressed by light, so turn down your lights before bedtime. Don't watch TV in bed – the TV belongs in the living room. Don't bring work to bed. Keep the bedroom for sleep – (and sex), so that your mind is programmed for sleep. Try going to bed an hour at least before midnight. Your body uses sleep to repair and rebuild; your mind uses sleep to sort and organize, so if you short change your sleep, you're short changing your body and your mind.

PELLOWE 
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